

**COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
YOUTH/HUMAN SERVICES/EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MARCH 28, 2012**

PRESENT:

J. BERNARD
E. FELDER
D. SCOTTO
S. TURET

R. CERVONE
L. HILL
S. SHIFFMAN
T. VAZQUEZ

E. CHAN
M. KOLMAN
B. SOLOTAIRE
D.C. VITO

EXCUSED:

P. BELLENBAUM

A. FORNECKER

ABSENT:

E. GOTTLIEB

M. RUIZ

M. SCOTT

GUESTS:

A. SKOP

J. DEVOR

***** MINUTES *****

Discussion with Anita Skop, District 15 Superintendent, and Jim Devor, President of District 15's Community Education Council around the new core curriculum, as well as issues in the community relating to the DOE particularly as they concern charter schools, school closings and DOE regulations.

Anita Skop, Superintendent for District 15 was introduced and gave a description of the district.

- Overcrowding no issue.
- Overlap CB6 and CB7.
- Northern border north of Atlantic; east, Flatbush and the Park with cutout for District 13.
- PS 321 is the most popular school.
- Transfer schools are small and linked to a CBO for emotional support – 4 in District 15. Transfer schools are different from suspension schools; a superintendent's suspension for a serious incident, e.g., hate crime.

Consortium formed when high school grads seemed unprepared for college or work force. ELA and mathematics standards were written for teachers to reach benchmarks of what their students can do (English Language Arts). Emphasis on problem-solving, info extraction, explaining your method; not about memorization. "Achievement gap" of schools with better resources (& families) versus challenged schools. Schools develop their own curriculum to these standards. Red Hook schools are a concern.

Co-location school closing issues: Department of Education determines a closure or co-location of a charter school. Community Board notification, public hearing process. Eight member board is completely dependent on the Mayor's office. No child left behind – NYS introduced "persistently low achieving schools." Turnaround meetings are mandated to determine these schools' fate.

Charter schools: The one in 676 was supported by CEC – not always a negative view. District 15 "loses" 1000 "brownstone" kids between 5th and 6th grade. A "2 year" charter school now in

its 4th year has lead to Red Hook overcrowding. Success Academy was planned for 13 and 14 with lower utilization but immediately came to 15 with a 95% utilization rate. PS 32 has a gifted and talented program as well as an autism spectrum program. Brooklyn Ecological Gardens has an ecological perspective wanted to co-locate in Global but Success Academy matched the space. Chartered for neediest kids, went to affluent neighborhoods, pushed out other schools. When convenient, city calls NYC one “district” so they did not have to represent.

Dearth of real estate in areas that most need schools; lots for a new school must be 22,000 square feet. DOE has little “credibility” in Albany and cannot redefine District boundaries.

What can CB6 address? Rezoning of schools an issue especially PS32. Building a new school is one way to address. 133 was going to get a K-8 school, got great support from all elected officials, but was killed by DOE. CB6 can be a voice in the Borough Presidents Office for supporting the needs in CB6 communities.

Major players in Tweed building want to do “public/private partnership” that can end-run around unions and parents. Anita Skop returned to focus on academic excellence; she would like to know what our constituents feel are needed. PS 29 and 261 are having aspersions cast on them as “failing schools”, possibly from charters that seek co-location. Five middle schools in District 15 are excellent, top elementary...High schools are catastrophic.

Motion to approve the minutes of the prior meeting was made by James Bernard and seconded by Elsie Chan.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Education Committee suggestions:

1. PA Presidents could use support in organizing above the school level. High schools need to be addressed. Park Slope Collegiate is a good school with a solid principal.
2. Middle school improvement seems to be unknown in the community.
3. Meeting of the Jays to look for and further cooperation.

Next meeting – is American Red Cross to come? Address service cuts.

A motion to adjourn was made by Benjamin Solotaire and seconded by Suzanne Turet.